

The National UN Volunteers-India

💖 Let's build children up, not knock them down

💖 We want every child to have the best start in life

We all want the children around us to have every possible chance to thrive – to grow up healthy, to reach their potential and follow their dreams. To have the best start in life.

And we all remember things adults said to us when we were children ourselves. Warm, caring words that build us up, encourage and inspire us, or cruel, demeaning words that knock us down, crush and destroy us.

Words matter. They stick. They last a lifetime. Their impact shapes who we are and who we become.

💖 **Words matter for children's development:**

Children's brains are built in response to the relationships they grow up with, and the words and tones around them, right from the moment they're born.

Warm, encouraging words and stable and secure relationships are the building blocks all children need to grow and thrive – but too many children are growing up without the supportive and loving relationships they need to succeed. Verbal abuse in childhood can actively weaken the foundations of our brains and cause us problems later in life.

What we can do

Children need us to step in. We all have a responsibility to help children flourish and protect them from verbal abuse – parents, friends, teachers, any of us who care about children.

Two in five children (41%) experience harmful verbal abuse by adults around them. Verbal abuse is often unintentional, but with greater awareness, we can stop it and repair the damage our words can cause. If we know better, we can do better.

Change is possible if we all work together to find lasting solutions that support children and all the people around them. Through research and partnerships, and

by raising awareness of the impact of verbal abuse, we can inspire action and fuel change. Our work will help people to understand verbal abuse of children and how to prevent it.

